

## African farmers need to be involved in biotechnology debate

African agricultural biotechnology experts say involving farmers in the biotechnology debate will encourage them to make informed choices and give them an opportunity to assess the potential benefits of adopting genetically modified crops to help boost their crop yields.

The experts, who met at the annual meeting of the Open Forum on Agricultural Biotechnology (OFAB) in Africa in Abuja, Nigeria, recently, resolved that strengthening grassroots engagement will offer farmers messages about new GM crops and weigh their role in efforts aimed at boosting agriculture's contribution to the continent's food security position.

Smallholder farmers often have no easy access to new crop technologies due to resistance to GM crops by African governments, poor grassroots campaigns by scientists as well as the fears peddled by anti-GM campaigners. As a result, most rural farmers have lost out to some of the potential benefits of biotech crop technologies that can help them reduce costs, improve crop disease resistance and improve crop yields.

Engaging with farmers and collaborating in on-farm trials can help the continent to reduce food imports, dependency on aid and guarantee sustainable food security for people on the continent. Dr. Margaret Karembu aptly sums it up: "We cannot feed the world of tomorrow with yesterday's technologies."

**Read the full, original article:** [Biotech Debate, Farmers Missing](#)